Characters

- CHORUS
- PEASANT
- ELECTRA
- ORESTES
- OLD MAN
- PYLADES
- MESSENGER
- CLYTEMNESTRA

Act

(The scene is outside the peasant's cottage. It is night, a little before sunrise.)

CHORUS

Our ancient city Argos. The river. Inachus.

It was here that King Agamemnon led his army forth and with ships of war set sail for Troy.

And having killed the King of Troy and sacked that noble city he returned here to Argos. And on our temple walls hung high his trophies.

Abroad he had had good fortune. But here in his own home he died by his wife Clytemnestra's treachery, and her lover Aegithus's murderous hand.

Now Agamemnon is dead.

Aegisthus is king now. And Clytemnestra is now his wife.

As for the children left behind ...

... the son of Orestes, Aegisthus resolved to kill, but an old slave took him off to Phocis,

Electra stayed in Argos and when she was of age nobles from all Hellas came to beg her hand.

Aegisthus, fearing if her husband were a prince, her noble son could avenge him for Agamemnon's death, kept her at home and let no one marry her.

But then he feared she might bear a son in secret by a nobleman so he planned to kill her.

Clytemnestra stopped him: She feared the hatred her child's death would bring on her.

So Aegisthus plotted a final scheme: He promised to anyone who killed Orestes ... now in exile ... a reward in

gold.

And gave Electra in marriage to a peasant.

(Enter ELECTRA *from the cottage with a bucket. She puts it down.)*

PEASANT

Electra why do you rise at dawn. You are a princess. You must rest.

ELECTRA

I must go to the spring for water. I know you don't expect it of me but it's only right that I do my share and work with all the strength I have for our life.

PEASANT

Go then if you wish to the spring. I will work in the fields this morning. As soon as it grows lighter I will take the oxen out, and do some harrowing.

(Exit ELECTRA *and* PEASANT. *Enter* ORESTES *and* PYLADES.)

ORESTES

Ha! Pylades you're the man I trust above all others. I've shared your home. You're a true friend the only one who has honored me in spite of the condition to which I have fallen.

Now I have come, sent by Apollo's oracle home to shed the blood of those who shed my father's blood.
Last night I visited my father's grave, offered tears, a shorn lock and killed a lamb.
And now instead of entering the city, I have come to the border to secretly search for my sister who, I have heard, is married and lives near.

I must see her and get her help in executing our revenge.

Look, the dawn is rising. Let us find a ploughman whom we can ask whether Electra lives near by.

Wait, a slave come weeping along the road.
For the moment, let's keep out of sight.

ELECTRA

(Weeping.)

Agamemnon was my father.
My mother was Clytemnestra.
And I am known to the people of Argos.
As "poor" Electra. My life is unbearable and you
my father lie dead, Agamemnon killed by Aegisthus.

My brother, what city holds you in bondage?
Sad in my room I dream of you.

a del femo pja pol i tia sek ra ta

deizmio lipi meni sto do mati omu
se oni revo me.

My cry of despair
Father I call to you in the deep Earth.
Hear my lamentation which fills my days,
Pateramu Pateramu
Cruel the axe's edge that cut your flesh.
Cruel the cunning that awaited you when you finished your journey from Troy and your wife welcomed you home not with a crown but with a two edged sword.
CHORUS

Electra our princess, we've come to visit you to tell you of the festival the day after tomorrow. All the unmarried girls are getting ready to walk in the procession to Hera's temple. We want you to come.

ELECTRA

I cannot come. Fine dresses and necklaces of gold my dear friends, make my heart sadder. I could not bear the sight of the girls of Argos dancing, nor would I want to dance with them.
Besides, look at me my hair is uncared for, my dresses are rags. My appearance would bring shame to Agamemnon's memory.

CHORUS

Electra do come. The goddess Hera may inspire you. We

will get for you a lovely gown and a golden necklace.
Do you expect ever to overcome your enemies if you spend your time weeping instead of praying to the Gods.
Your day of happiness will come, not from weeping, but from praying on these feast and festival days. Come.
ELECTRA

But my friends I have prayed.
Year after year.
But no god hears.
I've prayed for the king who died.
I've prayed for the prince who lives exiled in an unknown country.
Still I am banished from my ancestral palace while my mother lies with Aegisthus in a bed stained with murder.
Fo nos.

(Suddenly ORESTES *and* PYLADES *approach accompanied by attendants.)*

ELECTRA

(Behind chorus.)

min me az ji zis!

ORESTES

Perimene. Akuse. I bring news of your brother Orestes.

ELECTRA

Tu a del fumo?

ORESTES

Yes.

ELECTRA

Is he alive or dead?

ORESTES

He is alive.

ELECTRA

Alive.

(Overcome for a moment.)

In what land is he living?

ORESTES

He goes from city to city but allowed to be a citizen of none.

ELECTRA

Is he hungry?

ORESTES

He is not hungry but like a refugee and powerless.

ELECTRA

Did he send a message to me?

ORESTES

He yearned to know if you were alive and what kind of life you are living.

ELECTRA

I have been devastated by grief as you can see.

ORESTES

Yes, as I weep to see.

ELECTRA

I've shorn my hair like the victims of the Scythians to mark my grief.

ORESTES

To mark your grief for Orestes and for your father's death.

ELECTRA

They were and are still dearer to me than life itself.

ORESTES

Your brother loves you in that same way.

ELECTRA

I know he loves me wherever he is.

ORESTES

Tell me Electra, why do you live so distant from Argos?

ELECTRA

I was forced to come here when I married.
My husband is from Mycenae.

ORESTES

And this is your house?

ELECTRA

Yes.

ORESTES

It is very poor.

ELECTRA

My husband is poor but he has shown me great kindness, even reverence. He has never come near my bed.
To him I am still the princess Electra.

ORESTES

Perhaps he thinks Orestes may return still and avenge him.

ELECTRA

I think not. I think he acts from his heart. He reveres my royal ancestry.

ORESTES

That will make Orestes happy. And Clytemnestra, did she stand back and let this cruelty be committed against you.

ELECTRA

My mother cares for Aegisthus and only for Aegisthus and he is the one she listens to.

ORESTES

What made Aegisthus do this to you?

ELECTRA

He did not want me to have noble sons who could avenge him.

ORESTES

Then you are powerless.

ELECTRA

Yes.

(Silence between them.)

ORESTES

These women around us. Are they friends?

ELECTRA

Yes. They are my trusted friends.

ORESTES

And I can speak openly?

ELECTRA

Yes.

ORESTES

Well then suppose Orestes comes, do you think he could carry out his killing?

ELECTRA

He would have to be strong, as our father's murderers were.

ORESTES

And Electra, would you be willing to help Orestes kill your mother?

ELECTRA

I would, with the same axe with which she killed my father.

ORESTES

I will tell him then that you are steadfast.

ELECTRA

When I have shed my mother's blood as payment for my father's death then I can die content.

ORESTES

I know these are words Orestes would want to hear you speak if he could see you.

ELECTRA

If I saw him I would not recognize him.

ORESTES

No, you were both young when you were parted.

ELECTRA

There's only one who would know Orestes now.

ORESTES

You mean the old slave who stole him away and saved his life.

ELECTRA

Yes, that old man was my father's tutor.

ORESTES

Tell me, was your father given a grave near his noble kin.

ELECTRA

His body lies now where it fell, thrown out of doors, and no one is allowed to touch it.

ORESTES

Orestes also yearns to know of the wrongs committed against you these past years.

ELECTRA

I do not want my brother to anguish unduly. It is enough to tell him that I live exiled here on the border of the city. I have friends but my grief is such that I live mostly in solitude with my husband. Meanwhile our mother lives surrounded by the spoils of Troy that my father brought home. And Aegisthus who killed him gets into my father's own chariot and rides back and forth swaggering, clasping in his bloody hand the very sceptre which my father carried when he led

Hellas to war. On my father's grave no wine was poured, no wreath of of myrtle laid, dishonored, bare, there it lies.

Aegisthus when he's drunk, I've heard, jumps on the grave and flings stones at my father's name inscribed

there and shouts, Where is your son Orestes? Why does he not return to protect your tomb?
ELECTRA

So dear stranger I beg of you, tell Orestes everything I have said. I speak for myself and for his father. Agamemnon brought death to the Trojan nation. Ask him can he not kill one man?

(Enter the peasant.)

PEASANT

(Frightened for ELECTRA.)

Strangers what do you want at our door?
Electra you should not let strangers come so close to our door.

ORESTES

We bring great news,
We would never harm the princess Electra.

ELECTRA

These two men have brought me word of Orestes.

PEASANT

Orestes?

ELECTRA

Yes.

PEASANT

Is Orestes still alive?

ELECTRA

Yes he is still alive and he has sent them word of me.

PEASANT

Is this true?

ORESTES

On my honor I swear it.

ELECTRA

(To men.)

This is the man who is known as "poor Electra's husband."

PEASANT

For this great news, please come inside. Such that we have is yours.

ORESTES

Let us accept this house's hospitality.

(Exit ORESTES *and* PYLADES *into the cottage.)*

ELECTRA

(To her husband.)

You know how bare our house is. These two guests are far above our level. Why must you ask them in?

PEASANT

Why not? If they're as noble as they look they'll be at home in this cottage.

ELECTRA

Since you've done it now,

Go quickly and find my father's old servant, who since they turned him out of Argos, tends a flock of sheep close to the Spartan frontier.
Tell him we have guests and he must come and bring something that I can cook and give them. He'll be joyful to know my brother, the child he once saved, still lives. He'll bless the gods.
PEASANT

I'll go now to the old man and take your message. You go in now and get things ready.

(Exit ELECTRA *and PEASANT.)*

CHORUS

Long ago in the mountains of Argos,
A soft young lamb was found by Pan,

And the lamb had a lovely fleece of pure gold.
And Pan, they say, brought it to Atreus king of Argos.

And lovely songs rose loud
In praise of the golden lamb.

Then Thyestes lay secretly with Atreus' wife,
And persuaded her and took the marvelous lamb to his own house.

Then going forth to the assembled people he proclaimed
That he held in his own house
The lamb with the golden fleece.

Then it was that Zeus turned back
The glittering journeys of the stars,

And from that day on, the blaze of divine fire

Drives always toward the western sky;
And the parched plains of Ammon languish untouched by dew.
And Zeus withholds from them his sweet rain.

That is the story.

But I can hardly believe

That the golden sun

Changed his burning course,

To requite a human sin.

Nevertheless,

frightening tales are useful:
They promote a reverence for the gods.

O Clytemnestra,

Had you but remembered tales like these
As you raised your hand to kill your husband.

(Enter OLD MAN *carrying flowers and a lamb.)*

OLD MAN

Electra my princess. Electra.

*(*ELECTRA *appears at the door.)*

I've brought you a lamb bred in my own flock, took it

from the ewe this morning, flowers and cheese straight from the press. And here's some old rich-scented wine. Let someone take this into the strangers. For at this moment my eyes are full of tears.
ELECTRA

Why are you weeping old man?

OLD MAN

On my way here I passed your father's grave. I knelt and shed tears and then I opened this wineskin and poured wine as an offering,
When I saw there on the altar a black fleeced ewe just newly sacrificed, the blood still wet, and beside it a lock of hair. What man would dare visit that grave? No Argive would. Do you think your brother could have come here secretly and paid reverence to his father's desolate tomb? Electra go there. Match that hair with your very own, see if it is the same.

ELECTRA

Even if it were Orestes' hair it would not match mine. Orestes' hair was grown like an athlete's in the palaestra and mine like a woman's softened by combing.
And besides, I do not think my brave Orestes would come to Argos secretly.

OLD MAN

That may be true; but still, go and see if the size and shape of the footprints near the grave are like your own.

ELECTRA

How could there be footprints on rocky ground?

No, either a stranger pitied the sad grave and laid the lock there or some Argive dared the guards and made these offerings.
OLD MAN

Well, where are these strangers? I want to see them.

ELECTRA

Here they come.

(Enter PYLADES *and* ORESTES.)

OLD MAN

My greetings to you strangers.

ORESTES AND PYLADES

Greetings Old Man.

ORESTES

Electra whose friend is this man's?

ELECTRA

This man was my father's tutor.

ORESTES

(Strangely.)

The same man that got your brother safely away.

ELECTRA

Orestes owes his life to him.

ORESTES

Why does he stare at me? Perhaps he thinks I am like someone.

(The OLD MAN *stares at* ORESTES.)

OLD MAN

Stranger, that scar on your brow. How did you come by it?

ORESTES

I fell and cut it once.

OLD MAN

You fell and cut it once when chasing a fawn.

ORESTES

Yes I fell and cut it once when chasing a fawn.

OLD MAN

You fell and cut it once when chasing a fawn with me.

ORESTES

I fell and cut it once when chasing a fawn with you.

*(*ELECTRA *stares at them.)*

OLD MAN

My princess look at this man before you.

ORESTES

Yes, Princess Electra, look closely at this man before you.

OLD MAN

Princess Electra it is your brother.
It is Orestes.

ELECTRA

O my brother. Is it you?

ORESTES

Yes. Electra.

(They run and embrace.)

ELECTRA

I thought you'd never come. O res ti mo

ORESTES

a ga pi me ni mu a del fi

ELECTRA

I had despaired.

ORESTES

I too.

ELECTRA

You really are Orestes.

ORESTES

Yes. Your one ally.

(To OLD MAN.*)*

Now tell me old man, have I any friends in
Argos?
Or am I bankrupt ... as in fortune ... so in all?
Shall I go by night or day?
What way shall I set out to meet my enemies?

OLD MAN

My son you are an exile: you have not one friend. In your old friends' eyes you are finished; no one pins his hopes on you.

ORESTES

I want to get back to Argos and my father's house.

OLD MAN

If that's your aim then you must kill Aegisthus and your mother.

ORESTES

That's the deed I've come for.

OLD MAN

As I see it, it's useless to think of getting inside the walls of the royal house. Aegisthus has sentries everywhere. He's greatly fearful, it is rumored, and cannot sleep at night. But listen. Fortune may have intervened. On my way here I saw Aegisthus.

ORESTES

Where? Pu je ron da

OLD MAN

Not far away in the pastures where his horses graze.

ORESTES

What was he doing?

OLD MAN

Preparing a banquet for the Nymphs. He had everything in hand to sacrifice a bull.

ORESTES

Were his men with him or had he just slaves?

OLD MAN

Only his slaves were there. No Argives.

ORESTES

Would there be some who would recognize me?

OLD MAN

No. They're slaves recently come to Argos. They've never seen you.

ORESTES

I wonder how I can get close to him.

OLD MAN

Perhaps you could just go and stand along the road near the sacrifice so he will see you.

ORESTES

And then.

OLD MAN

Often he can't resist playing the role of King. He may command you to join him.

ORESTES

I will go at once. Once I am there I will make my plan. Was my mother with him?

OLD MAN

She is in Argos still. She is afraid to go too much among the people. She is much hated.

ORESTES

Then it will be difficult to kill both of them.
And they must die at the same time.

ELECTRA

The killing of my mother I shall claim myself.

ORESTES

Then we shall succeed.

ELECTRA

Old Man will you help us?

OLD MAN

I will. What plan do you have for Clytemnestra's death?

ELECTRA

This Go and tell her I have borne a child ... a son. Say it was ten days ago.

OLD MAN

And how will this bring about your mother's death?

ELECTRA

When she is told of the birth of my son I know she will come.

OLD MAN

And why would she come, she who has disgraced you so.

ELECTRA

I know her well. She will come and pretend to weep over my son's lowly birth.

OLD MAN

Perhaps. And then once here?

ELECTRA

Once here, we will be ready.

OLD MAN

If I see Clytemnestra's death then I can die content.

ELECTRA

But first now you must show my brother where to go to find Aegisthus. And then go to my mother and tell her what I have said.

OLD MAN

I will speak your very words.

ELECTRA

Orestes. Our moment at last has come.

(They raise their hands in prayer.)

ORESTES

Zeus. Help us conquer our father's enemies and ours.

ELECTRA

And have pity on us for our days have been pitiable.

OLD MAN

Send strength to these dear children.

ORESTES

Bring the army of the dead to fight with us.

ELECTRA

Bring the brave who shared the victory over Troy.

OLD MAN

Bring all who hate impure hearts.

(Pause. ORESTES *and* OLD MAN *rise.)*

ELECTRA

Father, can you hear?

OLD MAN

He has heard all. I am certain. It is time to go.

*(*ELECTRA *rises.)*

ELECTRA

Orestes I give you my unbroken word. If in the struggle you lose your life, be sure I shall not live. I'll drive a sword into my heart.

ORESTES

I understand.

ELECTRA

Then take your courage in both hands.

(Exit ORESTES, PYLADES, OLD MAN.*)*

(To women.)

My friends, your part will be to be beacons and to raise the cry for life or death. I'll be on watch too holding this sword. If Orestes is defeated, our enemies shall not wreak vengeance on his sister.

(She exits.)

*(*CHORUS *assumes lookout positions; a death cry is heard.)*

CHORUS

What was that sound?
Electra, princess, come.

ELECTRA

What is it?

CHORUS

We heard a cry like death.

ELECTRA

I heard the cry too.

CHORUS

It comes from far off.

ELECTRA

That was my brother. This means the sword for me now.

CHORUS

Wait Electra, until we hear the cries once more.

ELECTRA

We have lost. I fear it.

CHORUS

Wait ... here in the darkness comes a messenger.

(They face him.)

MESSENGER

Victory, women of Mycenae, Victory.

I proclaim Orestes' Victory.

Aegisthus, Agamemnon's murderer lies dead.
Praise be to the gods.
ELECTRA

di ke o si ni il thes epi tel lus
Tell me. Tell me of his death.

MESSENGER

After we left this cottage we reached a road and we followed this road to where Aegisthus was. He stood in a field cutting young myrtle leaves to make a garland for his head.
When he saw us he called out "Greetings Strangers. Where do you come from?"
And Orestes said "We are from Thessaly. We are on our way to Delphi to sacrifice to Zeus.
Then Aegisthus said, "Stay here, be my guests, I'm killing a bull in honor of the nymphs and you must share the banquet. I won't let you refuse.
"Slaves bring holy water for these guests. Come here to the purifying bowl."

Orestes answered, "We purified ourselves down the road there in holy water from a stream.
So Aegisthus, if strangers may join in the sacrifice with Argive, we will not refuse you." The slaves guarding the King lay down their spears, being busy lighting fires, preparing the sacrificial bowl.

Then Aegisthus took barley and threw it on the altar.
"May evil suppress my enemies," he said, by which he meant you and Orestes. Then he said to Orestes,
"I've heard it said that Men of Thessaly are expert at cutting up a dead bull skillfully, friend, here's the sword.

Show us now if that's true."
It was a wellmade Dorian sword. Orestes grasped it firm threw off his coat then took the bull-calf's leg and with one stroke laid the bull's flesh bare, severed the carcass then opened up the guts. Aegisthus took augural parts and gazed at them.
The liver lobe was missing and the portal vein and the gall bladder portended evil visitations.
The king's face grew dark.
Orestes said, "What has upset you?"
"Friend," replied Aegisthus, "I'm much in fear of treachery from abroad. Agamemnon's son is the most dangerous enemy to me and to my royal house."
Orestes said, "What you, a king, fear an exile's plots?
This Dorian knife's too small, bring me a Phythian sword.
I'll split the breast bone, and we can feast."
They brought one, and he cut bending over the augural parts.
Orestes then rose and struck him on the joint of his neck shattering his spine. His whole body writhed in agony and death.
The King's guard now seized their spears. But Pylades and Orestes stood their ground.
Orestes cried out, "I am Orestes. This man was my father's murderer whom I have punished.
At this they withdrew. At that instant he was recognized by an old man who had long served the royal house.
"It is Orestes" he said.
And suddenly they started to cheer and shout with delight. They put garlands on him. Now he's coming here bringing the body of Aegisthus.
CHORUS

Oh, Electra, blood has paid for blood.

Set your feet dancing.
Dance like the light.

(Piano in.)

O o res tis e ker vi se lam bri ko ro na
e la te na ho rep su me

ELECTRA

o egistos kitete nekros ekinos
pu katastrepse tinzoi tu pateramu
Come friends.
My finery that I possess that is
stored in the cottage I will
bring out.
Too I will bring the crown
for my brother's head.

CHORUS

Go Electra, bring the crown for Orestes.
While we dance to the muses.

(Chant resumes under dance sequence. The dance comes to an end when sight of the dead body of AEGISTHUS *occurs.)*

ELECTRA

(Placing a crown on ORESTES' *head and then* PYLADES.)

El a adelfumu afiseme nastere oso
Sto ke falisu aftingorona
Iltes piso fernondas to dikeo
Pu mas a niki ke o eh trosmas
Vris kete pj a ne kros sta podia mas
je ne e mu niki ti

(To PYLADES.)

Ke e si piladi
E pisis lave ap ta her jamu
Af to to niki ti rio stefani

ORESTES

Do what you wish throw out his carcass to the dogs. Impale him on a stake to feed the birds of heaven. He's yours Electra, once your master, now your slave.

ELECTRA

(To the body.)

You were the ruin of our life. My brother and I did you no harm but you made us fatherless.

ELECTRA

Take his body and put it out of sight. My mother must not see it before her throat is cut.

*(*ORESTES *sees* CLYTEMNESTRA *approaching in the distance.)*

ORESTES

Wait. There are other things we must decide.

ELECTRA

What is it?

(Looking in the same direction.)

An armed force from Mycenae.

ORESTES

No it is our mother.

ELECTRA

Good, she is stepping into the trap. Look how fine she is ...
A carriage, slaves, and her best gown.

ORESTES

What shall we do then? Are we really going to kill our mother?

ELECTRA

Have you grown soft as soon as you set eyes on her?

ORESTES

She bore me, she brought me up, how can I take her life?

ELECTRA

How? As she took our father's life.

ORESTES

It is wrong to kill my mother!

ELECTRA

You avenge your father.

ORESTES

Avenging him I am pure; but killing her condemned.

ELECTRA

If you neglect to avenge him you defy the gods.

ORESTES

But if I kill my mother shall I not be punished?

ELECTRA

He will pursue you if you let his vengeance go.

ORESTES

Some monster disguised as a god has commanded me. But I can't believe what the god told me is right.

ELECTRA

You cannot lose your nerve and be the coward now. You must use the same deception she used when with Aegisthus'

help she struck our father down.
ORESTES

I'll go in. Every step is dreadful and the deed before me still more dreadful yet if heaven so wills, let it be done.

(Exit ORESTES *and* PYLADES *into the house; enter* CLYTEMNESTRA *attended by female slaves.)*

CLYTEMNESTRA

Set down the carriage, trojan slaves. Take my hand and help me to this place.

ELECTRA

Will you give me the privilege to hold your royal hand mother? I too am a slave who you took prisoner by sword.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Your father brought all this on you by wicked treachery. When I married I did not expect to see my children killed. He took my child to Aulis where the fleet lay bound, lured from home with lies about Achilles and cut her soft white throat. My Iphegenia. If he had done it to avert the capture of his city, or to exalt his house he could be forgiven but to sacrifice my child so that the fleet might have good winds that I cannot forgive. And that was Agamemnon's reason for murdering my daughter.
Even then as wicked as it was, I would not have turned savage or killed him. But he brought home with him the whore Cassandra and kept us both in one house. So I killed him. I took the only way open to me. I turned for help to his enemies. Well, what else could I do.

ELECTRA

You destroyed the life of the most noble man in Hellas. You pretend that you avenge your daughter with my

father's blood.
There may be some who believe you but I know you. Before Iphigenia's sacrifice was decided on ... when Agamemnon was scarcely out of sight you began seeking what you should not. If Troy lost a battle your eyes clouded. Why? Because you didn't want Agamemnon to come back to Argos. I saw the way you looked at Aegisthus. Even if as you say, our father killed Iphigenia, what did my brother and I do to you? After you killed our father you exiled us from our house and bought yourself a lover with your dowry.
So if death demands justice then Orestes must kill you. If one revenge is just so is the other.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Electra, I regret that revenge now.

ELECTRA

It is too late for regret. But Orestes lives. Why do you not bring him home?

CLYTEMNESTRA

I am frightened for myself. They say Orestes is mad with anger over his father's death.

ELECTRA

And why do you let Aegisthus still persecute me?

*(*CLYTEMNESTRA *turns away. Silence.)*

CLYTEMNESTRA

(Abruptly.)

Why did you send for me?

ELECTRA

You were told of my confinement were you not?

CLYTEMNESTRA

I was. But why are you in this state, so ill-looking? The birth's well over now.

ELECTRA

Will you do this for me? Offer the tenth day sacrifice for a son.

CLYTEMNESTRA

It is usually done by the woman who delivered you.

ELECTRA

I was alone. I delivered myself.

CLYTEMNESTRA

What? In this house so far from any neighbor.

ELECTRA

We are poor; we don't have friends.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Well as a favor, I'll go in and pay the gods the respect for your son. And then I must go to where my husband's sacrificing to the nymphs out in the pasture.

(To servants.)

You there take the carriage away. And feed the horses. Give me as much time as I need to make this offering to the gods; then come for me.

(To ELECTRA*.)*

I have my husband to think of.

ELECTRA

Please come in.

*(*CLYTEMNESTRA *goes in.)*

All is prepared. The sword is sharpened for you. In the house of death you shall still be his bride whose bed you shared in life.

*(*ELECTRA *goes in.)*

CHORUS

Now retribution follows sin.
Through the fated house a new wind blows
Long ago my beloved Lord and King fell dead

Now retribution follows sin
Through the fated house a new wind blows
Long ago my beloved Lord and King fell dead

And through the rooms round the stone cornice
rang out his death cry.

O wicked wife why do you murder me,
returned after ten harvests
home to my country?

Now like a returning tide
justice comes to the reckless Clytemnestra.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Ped ya mu ya to o no ma ton te on
mi n sko to ne te tim mi ter as as
vo i thia ach ach
Soon or late heaven dispenses justice
Her revenge on her husband was unholy

CHORUS

Now Electra and Orestes come clothed

in fresh streams of their mother's blood.
Now Electra and Orestes come clothed
in fresh streams of their mother's blood.

i e lek tra ke o o re tis vu tij meni
sto fresko hye meno e ma tis miterastus

(All together on last "miterastus." Enter ORESTES, ELECTRA, *and* PYLADES *with body of* CLYTEMNESTRA.)

ORESTES

o yi o zef e si puv le pis o la osa i an
tro pi ka non ki tak se af to af to to e ma ti ro
te a ma di o so mata hti pi me na a paf to to hye ri

ELECTRA

I am guilty too. I burned with desperate rage against her, yet she was my mother.

(My mother in Greek repeated.)

i mi ter amu

ORESTES

O Apollo.
You have bestowed on me
a murderers destiny.
To what city shall I go.
Will any friend, will any man who fears god,
Dare to look into my face ... a son who has killed his mother?

ELECTRA

O what shall we do? O ti fa ka no me.
Where shall we go? pu Oa pa me

(Repeat in Greek.)

ORESTES

Did you see how in her agony

she opened her gown, thrust forth her breast
and showed it to me as I struck.
The body that gave me birth sprawled on the ground.

ELECTRA

As she uttered a shriek she put her hand on my face.
"My child I implore you" she said. Then she hung around my neck so that the sword fell out of my hand.

ORESTES

I held my cloak over my eyes
while with my sword I drove
the blade into my mother's throat.

ELECTRA

I urged you on and held the sword, my hand beside yours.

ORESTES

Come help me cover her limbs with her dress and close her wounds.

ELECTRA

As we wrap this cloak around her.
We loved you ... although we hated you.

CHORUS

This is the prophetic end of great sorrow.

CURTAIN